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JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

Campus murmurs over JU VC: Sau cites court resolution, teachers seek clarity

The campus reopened on Wednesday, three days after governor C.V. Ananda Bose ordered the removal of Sau as officiating VC

SUBHANKAR CHOWDHURY | PUBLISHED 28.12.23, 05:19 AM



Jadavpur University's officiating vice-chancellor Buddhadeb Sau enters Aurobindo Bhavan, which houses the VC's office, on Wednesday.

Bishwarup Dutta

Jadavpur University's officiating vice-chancellor Buddhadeb Sau, who is continuing in the office despite the governor's order to remove him and has cited a government order

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authorising him to keep discharging his responsibility as VC, attended office on Wednesday.

The campus reopened on Wednesday, three days after governor C.V. Ananda Bose, who is ex-officio chancellor of JU and all other state-aided universities, ordered the removal of Sau as officiating VC for daring to hold the annual convocation disregarding his advice to keep it in abeyance.



Sau came to the office of the vice-chancellor around 1.30pm.

“The university’s court, which met on Sunday before the convocation, has recognised me as VC. Some teachers on the campus are saying that the court asked me to continue only for the day of the convocation. But did the court members say that I cannot continue as VC beyond December 24 (the day the convocation was held)?” Sau said before stepping into the office of the VC.

He left after spending an hour in the office.

The university held its annual convocation on Sunday, but the VC, who attended the ceremony, did not award the degree certificates.

The responsibility of awarding the degree certificates was delegated to pro-VC Amitava Datta because the authorities apprehended that awarding the certificates through someone whose removal had been ordered the day before could lead to legal complications.

But a section of the teachers at JU refused to buy Sau’s logic that the court has recognised him as VC.

In a letter to the university’s registrar, Snehamanju Basu, the Jadavpur University Teachers’ Association has written: “In a few media reports, Prof. Sau has expressed that he will continue as vice-chancellor as per the resolution of the court of the university. But you should note that the court as the highest policy-making body of the university has no right to appoint/reappoint/remove a Vice-Chancellor.”

“Therefore, if a person without appropriate authority occupies the chair of the vice chancellor, that will create another illegal and complex situation. The decision of the last court meeting has no mention of the continuance of Prof. Sau as vice-chancellor,” the letter says.

The letter, signed by Parthapratim Roy, secretary of the teachers’ association, says: “The meeting of the court took into cognizance the prevailing crisis to hold the convocation and to confer the degree of students.”

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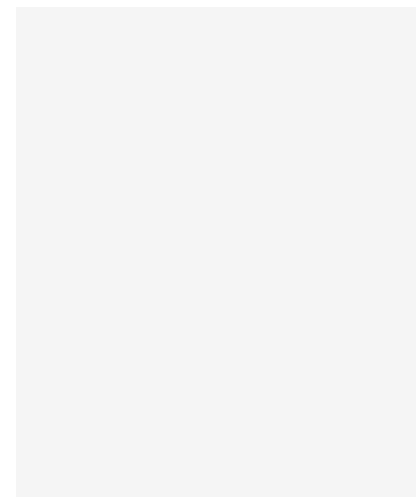
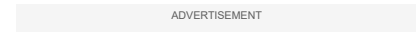
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Roy said that since there are contradictory orders issued by the education department and the chancellor, the confusion over whether Sau could continue as VC could be cleared by the court.

The Supreme Court is hearing a case over who has the authority to appoint officiating VCs – the governor or the state government.

The state government is going to mention the action of the chancellor on Sau whenever the case comes up for hearing in the apex court again, an official said.

“We have told the university authorities they should immediately approach a court of law to clear the air over the legality of Sau’s position as VC. Otherwise, all administrative work of the university will be hampered,” said Roy.

The governor has decided to move Calcutta High Court against the university’s decision to hold the convocation.

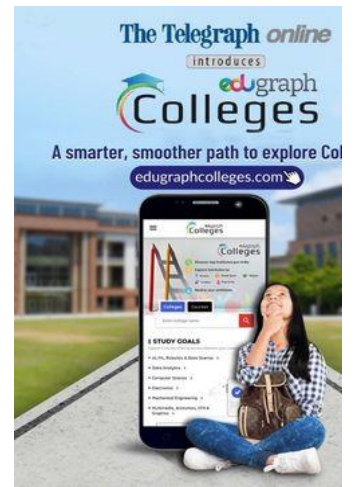
Education minister Bratya Basu on Wednesday said: “Several officiating vice-chancellors (appointed by the chancellor) have completed six months. They all should resign. Why is only Sau’s name being discussed? I morally support whatever step Sau has taken against the governor.”

A forum of former vice- chancellors of state-aided universities had on Saturday alleged that some officiating vice-chancellors appointed by the governor in an interim capacity have completed six months and the acts of the universities say interim VCs cannot stay beyond six months.

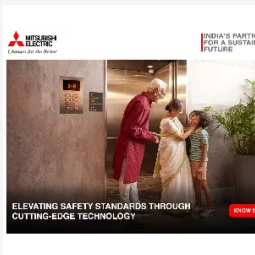
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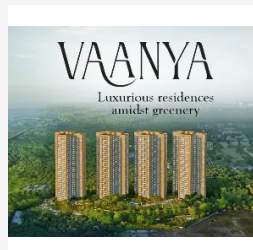
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